

PRISON ISSUES BOARDS MEETING
Crossroads Correctional Center
50 Crossroads Drive
Shelby, MT
May 13, 2014

Roll Call – Warden Joan Daly - MWP, Warden Martin Frink - CCC, Warden Tom Green - DCCF, AW Tom Wood – MSP, Rodger Handa – GFRP, Sam Casey – MCE, Patrick Smith - Chairman

Via telephone conference – Director Mike Batista

Via vision Net- None

There is a quorum present.

“In accordance with Montana Code Annotated Section 2-3-103(1), the Board will hold a public comment period. Please note that this open forum period for comment is the public’s opportunity to address the Board on any topic that is within the purview of the Board. While the Board may or may not take action on the issues presented, the Board will listen to comments, may respond to questions, may ask that particular questions, or comments be submitted in writing, and may ask that the issue be placed on a subsequent agenda for possible discussion by the Board. The Chairman of the Board will determine the amount of time allotted for public comment.”

“Pursuant to Montana Law, the Chairman may decide to hold a meeting or part of a meeting in executive session due to interests of individual privacy, or individual or public safety or security of public facilities, including jails, correctional facilities, private correctional facilities, and prisons, if disclosure of the information may jeopardize the safety of facility personnel, the public, or inmates of a facility.”

Approval of minutes from the last meeting
Moved to approve the minutes – Warden Martin Frink
Seconded the motion – Lieutenant Roger Handa
All approved

Welcome and introductions.

In addition to the above people, the following were present- Kurt Aughney, Lane Blair, Kristy Cobban, Andrea Evans, Douglas Fender, Travis Harris, Lena Havron, Dale Henrichs, Jerry Johnson, Gerald Kulpas, Louis Peterson, Thomas Pointer, Billie Reich, Alex Schroeckenstein, Christine Slaughter, Domingo Stewart, Brad Walter and Vance Laughlin.

Public-None in attendance

It was announced that Vance Laughlin will be the acting Warden of Crossroads Correctional Center until a new Warden has been chosen. Warden Martin Frink is leaving Crossroads Correctional Center. Director Batista wants to thank Warden Frink for his years of services and to wish him well on his new position.

Legislative and Management Team Updates – Director’s Office

Director Batista stated the Law and Justice Committee are doing an overview of the Board of Pardon and Paroles. The Department of Corrections is taking reform measures to control the offender population; the committees realized that they need to invest in the Community Correction programs. The Health and Human Services committee is looking at mental health and is preparing a proposal for the governor to help deal with the mental health population. Yellowstone County is looking to do a 100 bed expansion. The MDOC is going to work with the PEW Trust to review our system and evaluate.

Harlan Trombley, the Native American Liaison has been traveling to the different tribal nations, he discussed his role with corrections and encouraged the tribes to support the mentoring programs at the Montana State Prison.

It was stated they have reorganized the Health Services Divisions. Connie Winner is the new head of Health Services. The Department created a separate division to help with all health services. Discussions of expanding the state hospital or proposing to fix existing facilities are under way. The Reentry Task Force will do a presentation for the Law and Justice Committee next Month.

Division Updates –AW Tom Woods

Associate Warden Wood stated the County Jail hold list is still on the rise. He also reported that there is a lack of low side beds to move offenders into. MSP is still down 58 officers out of 341. It has been examined and there will be partial closures of the visitation and recreational time as needed. Closing of these posts will free up 5 to 7 officers that are very important, by moving these positions around helps to not jeopardize offenders and staff. Unfortunately training is difficult to achieve for the officers due to being down positions. May 28 and 29 will be the National Commission on Correctional Health Care audit at MSP.

Update on grievance issues -Kristy Cobban

Kristy Cobban stated that in January the finalized annual grievance report went out. Kristy wanted to thank all the facilities for doing a great job of answering the grievances at a lower level. Kristy Cobban reports a decrease in grievances at MSP, most of the grievances were answered at the Case Manager/Unit Manager stage. Key issues that were grieved were medical and the MP3 kiosks. Great Falls Regional prison has had some issues with grievances that are being addressed. It was suggested that an internal audit be done to help find the problem. In September the Grievance Conference will be held.

Annual Property and canteen review- Tom Wood

Every year we look at the property and canteen and after the Security Chiefs review it is brought to the PIB to review. A year ago we started taking a survey on the property and canteen items, this has helped some but we still only get limited responses from the inmate population. One suggestion was to rotate some of the choices of what they have on canteen, mainly rotating different types of candy and soda. Montana Women Prison has a separate list to fit the women's needs. Warden Daly had a few suggested changes to her site specific items and the group was fine with her asking canteen staff to adjust the few items. AW Wood then went on to list all of the suggested changes that his group had. Most were minor issues related to hobby items. There was discussion to have medical review the Benadryl and make sure that we had at least one shampoo that was specific for African Americans. After all discussion it was decided to go with AW Wood's list and he would provide that to the Canteen staff.

Motion to approve Warden Tom Green

Second to approve Warden Martin Frink

All approved.

Roundtable Discussion on Inmate/Facility Issues

GFRP – Roger Handa

Great Falls Regional Prison is buying a new vision net system. The prison made changes to the law library. A new training has started at the prison it is called Soft Chalk and the tests will be taken on the computer. We are preparing for a PREA audit. Great Falls is trying to update the phone system to the same as all the other regional prisons use, but it will be sometime in the future as they have a contract in place currently. GED has been started back up; at this point they are looking for a new teacher.

Great Falls is down 7 officers; this is the most we have been down in a long while. Karen Pepos quit and a new classification officer has been hired her name is Jen Ekberg..

DCCF- Warden Tom Green

The Eagala Horse Program will be up and running again, also the garden program will also be up and running again soon. Amy Lee the new case manager has been doing a great job. Dawson County's jail has been so full they have had to send the female offenders to Yellowstone County.

Dale Henrichs stated that tattooing has decreased.

MWP- Warden Joan Daly

Warden Daly stated that Montana Women's Prison is fully staffed. Correctional Officers week was last week. They had an activity each day of the week to show their appreciation. Montana Women's Prison has been working on the jobs at the Prison. 151 inmates are working out of 195. MCE has hired a dog supervisor, Craig Johnson. The A+ certification is almost done. ASCH training is also almost done.

MCE- Sam Casey

Sharon Sager has accepted the position as the Sales Manager of MCE. Brad Walter is the new Driver's License Coordinator. Brad has been with the Department of Corrections for 4 years. Sam Casey stated that the A+ certification in computer maintenance is starting soon. MCE is busy with all the work crews and the STEPS programs going.

MSP- AW Woods

Last week was also correctional officer's week at the Montana State Prison. They had a big BBQ and staff appreciation week. The Laundry project is under way, it estimated to take about 6 months. Montana State Prison is also updating their radio system. We have had a lot of visitors from various organizations like Disability Rights Montana, Human rights Bureau etc.

CCA- Martin Frink

Chief Moulton, the Chief of Programming has retired. Crossroads Correctional Center is down 4 officers, they are looking at recruiting some from Idaho. The new Associate Warden is Douglas Fender. Crossroads is teaching classes on Serve Safe to our kitchen workers. This will help the offenders when they are released back into the community.

Policy – Kurt Aughney

Kurt Aughney is the new Quality Assurance Director. There will be some changes in his area and will recruit for a new policy person to replace him. Contract Audits have started in the Pre-releases and Great Falls and Missoula is done.

Sub-committee updates reviewing inmate compensation- Kurt Aughney

Two state wide meetings were held on inmate pay for work assignments. The first meeting went good; the second one did not do so well. We focused mainly on education. The group didn't recommend any pay raises. We talked about not paying for Hi Set. We looked at some options. Option 1-no pay, Option 2- continue the way it is, Option 3 – not to pay until 6 months or when the course is complete. Option 4- pay when completed.

Joan Daly stated that it would help with Reentry if it was self-motivated and needed to be based on individuals and their desire to improve themselves. Associate Warden Wood agreed that the offenders need basic education to go back out into the community, and thought it was something they needed to do themselves. Warden Tom Green and Roger Handa think it could be an incentive for them to get paid. Douglas Fender asked why the incentive had to be money. Sam Casey agreed with Warden Frink about paying the offenders while getting there GED. Warden Frink also stated that the last time they quit paying the offenders to go to school their enrollment dropped significantly.

Pat Smith stated that we should table the issue for now and give the group one more chance to get closer to some sort of compromise. We have to come up with a consistent system across the board for all the facilities and something that everyone feels comfortable with. Lena Havron agreed to take over the group as Kurt has a new Bureau to get set up. She will contact all administrators and work with them to get a proposal together for the next PIB meeting.

IWF accounts & global fund updates, quarterly requests, funding reviews, and new business – Lena Havron

CCC has a one-time budget request for the steps program at \$10,000. It was decided that it should be in the facility annual budget and Lena will adjust it to there.

Roger Handa had a request to put cable for the TV's in the facility. He said he had quotes from 2 providers. Lena Havron stated that we need to look into the RFP process as Lena didn't think we could purchase that as equipment. She thought that it was an ongoing service.

Pat Smith asked if it is to come out of the global fund. Rodger said he had 83 units, two connections in each cell, 592.62 for the equipment and total cost would be at 19,780. Pat Smith clarified it need to be on a request form and Cascade will need to get in touch with the MDOC procurement department to see how to proceed.

The questions was put forth to give pending approval here out of Global Fund.

Tentative approval was put forth and,
All approved.

MWP asked about purchasing some exercise equipment, Lena Havron says there is no limitation but we need to keep the amount under \$25,000. Joan Daly will put in a request for equipment. Pat Smith will send out for approval votes by email.

Global fund allocation - Lena reviewed and explained that the second page is what we have spent for relief assistance and what we have for each facility. There has not been that many request but the requests are picking up. Lena doesn't think we need to add more money to the Global fund at this time.

All agreed not to put money into the global fund for this upcoming year, unless the fund looks like it may need an infusion later in the year. It can be brought up a later meeting if needed, if not we will readdress next year.

Lena Havron stated that we didn't address the indigent transportation/travel release funds in policy so asked if it would be better to allow release travel funds like indigent bus tickets to come out of the local facility budget or the global fund. On the indigent bus tickets should we look at where the offenders spent the majority of his time and take those funds from there if possible? Lena Havron suggested that we take these funds out of the global fund as that would be easiest and would not short the facility funds if they ended up with a bunch of them.

Lena, will get with the policy specialist and get this added to policy and will get a procedure developed so all are aware of it.

All Approved.

Review of annual IWF budgets-Lena Havron & PIB members

All of the facility annual proposed budgets were read and discussed to all members. There were a few adjustments to be made and Lena Havron agreed to make those adjustments. The group decided to approve the draft amounts and agreed that they may be adjusted by small amounts by Lena.

MSP \$280,400 All approved

DCCF \$33,050 All approved, plus DCCF is paying for the vision net.

CCA \$152,962 All approved

MWP \$52, 850 All approved

GFRP- \$56,836 all approved

Lena said that the offenders have asked what has been spent on the Global funds. She will provide a rollup of the costs and it will be very generic. We are not going to give specifics to the inmates due to security concerns.

Public Comment Period- None Present

Other Security/Confidential issues if needed

The STG meeting is set for June 5, 2014 at Great Falls Regional Prison.

The next PIB meeting will be at the Montana Women's Prison on September 16th, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.